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THE HISTORY OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE OF ILLINOIS

BY

FLEMIN WILLET COX, JUNIOR  
A. B. University of Illinois, 1908

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN EDUCATION


IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1921



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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Sept. 20 1921

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY  
SUPERVISION BY Flemin Willet Cox, Jr.  
ENTITLED The History of the High School Conference of Illinois

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts in Education

*O. Q. Chadsey*  
*O. Q. Chadsey*

In Charge of Thesis

Head of Department

Recommendation concurred in\*

*O. Q. Chadsey*  
*E. H. Cameron*

Committee

on

Final Examination\*

\*Required for doctor's degree but not for master's

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## OUTLINE

- I. Introductory Historical Sketch
- II. General Sessions
- III. Joint Sessions
- IV. Section Meetings
  - A. The Work of the English Section as an Example.
  - B. The Work of the Latin Section as an Example.
- V. General Conclusions





# HISTORY OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE OF ILLINOIS

## INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL SKETCH

A number of leading American educators of today are striving to apply the principles of science to education.<sup>1</sup> Too long has the educational world been subjected to guess, opinion, theory, and tradition.<sup>2</sup> The criticism, that the schools are often victims of fads and fancies, is, in many cases, a just one. Teachers' meetings hold an important place in the dissemination of fads, fancies, opinions, theories, plans, devices, methods, and movements of the educational world. If, at a typical teachers' meeting, the attention of any competent observer is called to the subject, he cannot help but note that the work accomplished is small in comparison to the effort put forth. Teachers' meetings, too often, have consisted of programs in which the so-called inspirational address has predominated.<sup>3</sup> This address may be given by one who has a real message, or by some one who has, for a time, caught the attention of the public.<sup>4</sup> There are numerous faults of the inspirational address. Sometimes, of course, it is sound, logical, and scientific, but often it is based upon theory that has never been proven. It often strains, and exaggerates facts to round out a rhetorical phrase or sentence. It commonly

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1. Bobbitt, "The Curriculum", p. 285. Judd, "Psychology of High School Subjects", pp. 111, iv. Parker, "Methods of Teaching in the High School", p. 3. Johnston, "The Modern High School", p. 10.
  2. Johnston, "High School Education", p. v. Bobbitt, "The Curriculum", p. iii.
  3. Programs of Illinois State Teachers' Ass'n and Sectional Meetings.
  4. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1916, p.12



appeals to the emotions, which are easily aroused, and which as easily subside. Another fault of the inspirational address may be seen in its effect upon the teachers. The part taken by them is one of passivity instead of activity. They are receptors and not doers.<sup>1</sup> The result of the typical teachers' meeting is the setting off of much oratory and impassioned speech, but the accomplishing of very little real work or experimentation.

The High School Conference of Illinois grew out of the work of the High School Visitor, who believed that it would be better for both the high schools of the state, and the University of Illinois, if each knew more about the other. It was started with some very definite purposes in view. It was not intended to be merely another teachers' meeting. These purposes might be considered as one expanding or developing purpose. The original aim of the Conference was to establish a feeling of cooperation and friendly relationship between the high schools and the University.<sup>2</sup> The cry of university domination has been long and loud. There is a just basis for complaint in the entrance examination system of the Eastern universities.<sup>3</sup> The Western method of accrediting high schools, though of a more democratic nature, has also given some ground for complaint. The Conference was the result of an effort made, through cooperation with the high schools, to take away every reasonable complaint of university domination, and still to maintain adequate entrance requirements.

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1. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference". 1916, p.12
  2. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference". 1910, p.5,7
  3. Macdonald, "The Interest of the Public in the College Curriculum", Educational Review, Jan. 1911. Quoted by Johnston, "High School Education", pp. 25, 26.



Its aim was to influence both the high schools and the University.

To accomplish this original purpose, the Director was not content to organize a meeting of the ordinary type. This might have been done. The attempt to establish a more friendly relationship through complimentary speeches and social fraternization, might have been made with some degree of success. A sterner plan, however, was adopted. It was a plan of real cooperation, the working together of all concerned upon some definite problems until some results were obtained.<sup>1</sup> It was an attempt to apply the scientific method to high school work in a more definite way than had ever been done before with teachers actually working in the schools of the state.

This purpose is one of the significant things of the Conference. It should be printed in capital letters and reiterated again and again because, unless it is sufficiently understood, the history and the work of the Conference cannot be rightly comprehended. The working out of this purpose is what has made the High School Conference of Illinois the only meeting of its kind in the country.<sup>2</sup>

The specific objective of the Conference in the first place was the formulation of syllabi and courses of a definite character for the different subjects in the program of studies. The next step was to test their value by using them in the schools of the state. In this way, the good parts could be marked, and the weak or worthless parts detected. The teachers who had thus used the syllabi or courses for a year were in position to criticize and revize intelligently at the next meeting of the Conference.<sup>3</sup> In this work all who would

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1. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1916, p.11

2. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1916, p.10

3. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1910, p. 7





were invited to participate.<sup>1</sup> It was work in which all who wished could have a part. It had the advantage of definiteness which is lacking in much of school work. It was in harmony with the scientific method of experimentation. It called for the collection of data from many sources. It called for real accomplishment instead of mere opinion. The starting point in each section was not so important, although it has been the custom to select it with as much care as possible, as the criticism, revision, and additions from time to time. Objection has been made that a syllabus is too often the work of one man or else made to fit one particular book. This may be true, but if tried out by many, criticised, revised, and added to, by many, not once but several times, it becomes a work of scientific merit.

The real work of the Conference has been the carrying out of this purpose. Syllabi, courses, outlines, and lists have been formulated. They have been used in the schools of the state. Criticism and revision have been frequent. Changes have been made because more definite knowledge has shown that changes were needed. Changed conditions in the educational world and the world at large have called for other adjustments. Thus, to definiteness of work, is added the advantage of flexibility to make adjustment in a world of change.

In spite of the excellence of this purpose, and in spite of the work accomplished by this body year after year, it has been extremely hard to hold the Conference to this purpose. Its whole tendency has been to revert to the usual kind of teachers' meeting. This is due to the fact that many have never grasped this dominating purpose. There are several reasons for this. (1) The personnel of the high school teaching force has changed almost completely, at

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1. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1916, p.16





least two or three times, since the Conference started. (2) The great growth of the Conference in numbers has tended to bring in many who are content to be receptors only, instead of collaborators in the real work of the Conference. (3) Then again, some sections have become large enough to become conventions in themselves.

The Director has used all his influence to hold the Conference to its great purpose. No one has seen the diverse tendencies with a clearer eye. No one has been more cognizant of the difficulties. He has reiterated the purposes again and again. He has repeatedly pointed out the dangers. He has called the Conference back time after time to its high duty. Upon the early programs, the purpose was stated every year. By editorial comment, in the introduction to the annual proceedings, and again and again at the general sessions, he reaffirmed the purpose of the Conference and pointed out the dangers to which it was exposed. The following from the editorial comment of the Proceedings of 1911 illustrates how this was done.

"In this day of meetings for stirring enthusiasm and getting inspiration, it is not easy for many of us to get the significance of real accomplishment as a means of arousing interest. We have repeatedly said to teachers, principals, and university professors that we are not seeking large numbers, but workers; not a great body of those passively receptive, but earnest groups of those who are willing to be aggressors in the field of educational advancement.

"It is natural, but a mistake, for a section committee to wait until fall and then 'make' a program. It is the all desirable thing to set up a problem at the Conference, or immediately after, and be prepared to report progress or a solution at the next session. There is then no need of making a program; it is already provided.



And what is still more to the point, the hungry who come to the meeting will then surely be fed.

"Shall we not strive, more and more, to make the Conference a producer, rather than permitting it to become a mere consumer, as is too often the custom with our educational gatherings?"

Although many attending the Conference never realized this fundamental purpose, indeed it seemed some of the sections never got a clear idea of it, nevertheless, the leaders in some of the sections that did excellent work were guided by it in shaping their programs for real accomplishment. Professor H. G. Paul, in reporting upon the work of a committee of the English section says, "The whole trend of these high school conferences has been to formulate a series of syllabi for the different high school subjects. Perhaps no subject has stood in greater need of such definite treatment than has English."

The plan of the organization of the Conference was by sections, controlled by committees. By sections, guided by committees, chosen by themselves, it was hoped to accomplish the real work of the Conference with as little waste of time and energy as possible. The general meetings, at the beginning, were used chiefly for announcements, and the completion of discussions, and business for the guidance of the Conference. This organization by committee had another purpose in view. It was hoped that thus, petty political wire pulling for recognition would be eliminated. Such, seems to have been the

case.<sup>1</sup> Later, as the developing purpose of the Conference came to include problems of articulation and administration, the objectives of the work, and the considerations of new movements which affected, not only the whole high school curriculum, but that of the elementary

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1. Hollister, "Proceedings of the High School Conference", 1916, p. 11



and college curricula as well, the general session became of more relative importance. The work of the general conference committee assumed greater importance with the greater need of guidance, articulation and the initiation of new lines of endeavor.

As the work of the Conference proceeded year after year, the purpose developed. It shifted from the consideration of the material of subjects of the program of studies alone, to the objectives to be attained by the use of the material. In fact time and again in the discussions, aims of various kinds, some good some bad, had been put forth. There came a time when it was necessary to find a touch stone by means of which the value of these many and diverse aims might be estimated. In 1918 Dean Charters read a paper at one of the general sessions entitled, "What Has Thus Far Been Accomplished and Is Now Available for the Readjustment of School Curricula", which, together with the report of a committee of the N. E. A. entitled "The Reorganization of Secondary Education", furnishes, as many think, the required touch stone.

There was one more slight shift in the developing purpose of the Conference. From a consideration of the objectives, it went to a consideration of the child, and the announced purpose of the High School Conference in 1919 is universal high school education for the children of all the people of Illinois. The steps leading to this objective are given thus by the Director in the Proceedings of the High School Conference of 1919 on page 10.

"This objective we have called the universalization of high school education for the children of all the people in Illinois. In order to advance successfully towards this objective we found that many things should be done in order to clear the way and make real





progress possible. First, there were needed readjustments to be made in the high school curriculum and in the curriculum of the schools leading to it. Second, existing conditions for the training and supply of teachers needed to be thoroughly canvassed with a view to providing for any deficiencies that might appear. Third, the provision of schools, either part time or all year, for those compelled by economic conditions to be breadwinners would have to be carefully studied and provided for. Fourth, the problem of extension and enforcement of compulsory attendance to include high school period must have attention. And fifth, we must be sure that were in the state a sufficient number of normally conditioned high schools and so distributed as to make attendance equitably feasible to all. If we add to this a careful survey of methods as affecting the economy, sequence, and effectiveness of instruction we readily see that we shall have here an objective that may easily comprehend all that such an organization can ever hope to accomplish."

The High School Visitor first recommended the establishment of a conference in his annual report to the President of the University in 1903. It was recommended, that the conference be established "on a cooperative basis with the various high schools of the state", and that this conference have for its purpose "more definite lines of work on the various high school subjects". No action was taken at that time. The recommendation was repeated for the year 1904. Since the resignation of Mr. Draper had left the office of president vacant, the recommendation came before the Council of Administration, which approved the plan, and appointed a committee of the Council, to which Mr. Hollister was added, to affect an organization. To this committee, composed of Vice President Burrill as chairman,





Deans Forbes, Kinley, and Clark, Mr. Hollister, upon request, submitted his plans for the first conference.

Although an autumn date was preferred for the meeting, the first one was held in February on account of the late date upon which the committee acted. The second was also held in February because the new president, Edmund J. James, was inaugurated October, 1905. After the first two meetings, however, the Conference has been held in November, during the week end before Thanksgiving. Because of this change of time in having the conference, 1906 has the distinction of having had two conferences.

President James, before the second meeting, placed Mr. Hollister as head of the general committee and thus gave him more authority to carry out his plan, and at the same time made him responsible for the success or failure of this innovation. Mr. Hollister has remained at the head of the General Conference Committee and has seen it grow from its first enrollment of about seventy-five, to its latest enrollment of 2600. His hand has guided the work and he has endeavored to hold it to the early aim of making it a working conference.

#### THE GENERAL SESSION

The aim, at the beginning, was to make the work of the sections the important feature of the Conference. This has continued to be the aim, but the great growth of the conference in numbers and the increase in the number of the sections has made it imperative that more time be consumed by the general sessions. The need of coordinating the work of the whole, so that different sections might not work at cross purposes caused the general meetings to assume an



importance not foreseen at the beginning. Large movements in Education which affected the work of many or even all sections were given a place upon the general program. Sometimes a speaker of national reputation spoke in a general session upon some phase of work of some particular section. This naturally called the attention of the whole conference to the work of this group and stimulated it to greater endeavor.

The first Conference, in 1905, had a general session from 2.00 to 5.00 P. M., Thursday; one from 7.30 to 9.50 P. M. Friday; and one from 9:00 to 11:00 A. M. Saturday. In the first general session, the Director effected an organization and in the other two, nothing was done beyond completing the organization and forming plans for the next conference. In February, 1906, a general session was held on Thursday afternoon commencing at 2:00 P. M. Another was held commencing at 7:30 P. M. of the same day and a third at 7:30 P. M., on Friday. There was no general session of Saturday. There was no set program for the first general session, but there was one number on each of the other two. In the November meeting of 1906, no meeting was held on Thursday. The Conference started with the section meetings at 9:00 A. M., Friday. A general session with one number on the program, was held at 7:30 P. M., on Friday, and one, with two numbers, on Saturday, commencing at 9:00 A. M. In 1907, the time of the beginning of the Conference was set at 7:30 P. M. Thursday. It closed with the session of Saturday morning. The three general sessions were permanently fixed at Thursday, 7:30 P. M., Friday, 7:00 P. M., and Saturday, 9:00 A. M.

The growing importance of the program of the general session may be seen from noting the number of prepared papers or addresses



given at each one.

Conference	Thursday 7:30 P.M.	Friday 7:30 P.M.	Saturday 9:00 A.M.
1907	0	1	2
1908	0	1	1
1909	0	1	1
1910	0	1	1
1911	0	1	1
1912	1	1	1
1913	1	1	1
1914	1	1	2
1915	1	1	1
1916	0	1	2
1917	1	1	2
1918	1	1	1
1919	3	2	3
1920	3	2	3

#### THE JOINT MEETINGS

Another means of harmonizing the work of different sections was the joint session. It was used, sometimes to thresh out conflicting tendencies, and sometimes to bring about co-ordination of the work. The first joint session was in 1907, in the afternoon meeting, on Friday, between the English and Social Science groups. In 1906, the Social Science groups had recommended one-half year of English History. This meeting was clearly for co-ordination because the subject discussed was, "The Relation of English History to The Teaching of English Literature". The second joint session





was in 1911, in the afternoon meeting, on Friday, between the Agriculture and Biology sections. It also was a meeting for correlation, but there was a possibility of differences of opinion to be ironed out between these groups. The topic for discussion was, "A Critical Examination of The Pedagogical Condition and Principles Involved In The Introduction Of Agricultural Into Secondary Schools", by L. D. Coffman. Mr. Coffman's conclusion was that there is not enough correlation between the two to enable the biologists to teach Agriculture. He pointed out that Agriculture, though drawing upon the other sciences, must have an organization of its own and be taught both as a science and an art.

A committee was appointed in 1913 for the purpose of considering the problem of a general science course as the first part of the science curriculum in the high school. In 1914, all the science groups, including Agriculture, Biology, Domestic Science, Geography, and Physical Science met in joint session, Friday afternoon. Here was a session whose objects were to discuss different viewpoints and to prevent the different sections from getting at cross purposes.<sup>1</sup> The committee had arranged a program that they thought would bring out the diverse views and recommended further study, experimentation, and discussion. The discussion of the session revealed a wide divergence of views from the strong advocates, to the strong opponents of General Science. Nothing further seems to have been done concerning General Science until in 1916, when the Director of the Conference appointed another committee to make a report on the "Correlation of Science Work". In 1917, this committee reported to the various science groups, and in 1918, another joint session was held by the science groups to try to find a place of agreement. After much

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1. Committee Report, "Proceedings of High School Conference" 1914 p.46





discussion a resolution was adopted in favor of a general science course of two years as an introduction to science, and a committee was appointed to formulate a course for two years. In 1919 another joint session was held, but the committee had not done much work. The chairman, Mr. J. L. Pricer, reported what had been done, gave a tentative course for the second year, and advised the appointment of a new committee for the continuance of the work. In 1920, the science groups met in their respective sessions, and their programs made no reference to the General Science committee.

In 1916, there was a joint session held, on Friday afternoon, between the Agriculture and the Physical Science groups. The object of this meeting was correlation as is shown by the two topics chosen for discussion, "The Influence of the European War on American Chemistry" by Professor Parr. and "Agricultural Development as Influenced by Chemistry" by Professor Robert Stewart.

In 1918, a joint session of the language groups, including English, Modern, and Classical languages was held. Its purpose was coordination of the work. One recommendation of the committee was, "That the Latin teacher will, to a greater extent than has hitherto been the case, call attention to the similarity of roots, not only in English and Latin, but also in French and Spanish. In the same way, the English teacher will remind the pupils that certain English words are not so very different in appearance from Spanish, French, and Latin words." Another paper urged the teaching of Latin in the seventh and eighth grades in order that the pupils might have a better command of English grammar and language.

In 1919, another joint session of the language groups was held. The English group was not included this time. The purpose



of the meeting was entirely different. It was to discuss cross purposes. The main subject was the time, length, and order of the foreign languages in the program of studies. The influence of the purpose of the Conference was evidently controlling the action of this group, since it resolved to experiment to try to find a solution. The proposal was made and adopted, to try, in different schools, different languages for beginning work.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECTION

At the first conference, which met February 16, 17, and 18, 1905, there were three sections. The section meetings were thus early given emphasis, because the conference consisted almost wholly of these three sections. The plan from the beginning was to consider every subject in the Program of Studies, but the three, English, Biology, and the Physical Sciences were chosen first because there seemed to be more urgent need for unification in these subjects than in the others. The name of the conference as it appears upon the printed program was "A Joint Conference on English and on Science Work in High Schools."

The Second Conference which met February 8, 9, 10, 1906, was called "High School Conference on English, and on Physical, Biological and Social Sciences." Thus a Social Science section was added the second year, according to the plan of progressing through the Program of Studies. After the second conference also, in accordance with this plan of progressing through the Program of Studies, the Biological and the Physical Science sections were discontinued. The third conference which met November 23, 24, 1906 was named "High School Conference on Social Sciences, Agriculture and Manual Arts."



Even English was omitted from this conference, the sections being as named above. A note on the program under the Agricultural Group said, "This group includes what was originally called a Biological group."

The name given for the fourth conference was merely "Annual High School Conference." This name has been held from that time to the latest program, that of 1920, and showed that the conference had now become an established annual affair, and that its purpose was well enough understood to omit from the name the subjects of the Program of Studies to be discussed. The Social Science Section and Manual Arts Section appeared upon this program. Agriculture and Domestic Science was the name of a third, showing a new subject appearing in connection with an old one. The English section was on the program again and Mathematics and Geography were other new sections. The first joint session was held this year between the English and Social Science Section.

A new spirit of the conference was shown by the action of the English section this year in moving, "That a permanent organization should be effected, to be known as 'The Illinois Association of English Teachers'". A committee was appointed to draw up a constitution that was adopted at the next annual meeting in 1908.

In 1908, these sections were named upon the program: English, Social Science, Mathematics, Manual Arts, Geography, Agriculture, Domestic Science, and Foreign Language. Under English, appeared a sub-title, "Association of English Teachers". Domestic Science, formerly with Agriculture, was now separated from it. The Foreign Language group made a newly-formed section, which in the afternoon, divided into three groups, Classical, German, and Romance. The English section, this year, decided to issue a bulletin in order that the work





might have a stronger, closer organization. The bulletin has been issued until the present time, 1921.

The sections of 1909 were English, Social Science, Mathematics, Agriculture, Domestic Science, Manual Arts. Geography was missing from the list, after appearing twice. Biology appeared again under the name of Natural History Section and Physical Science reappeared under its old name. Foreign language was divided into two sections, Classical and Modern Language, the latter was further divided into two groups, German and Romance. A committee of the Social Science group had been appointed in 1906 to work upon the Commercial Subjects. They reported to the Geography section in 1907. The Commercial Section was organized as a separate group in 1909.

By 1910, the section meetings, for the most part, had assumed a more permanent character. The organization of each one continued year after year. The earlier plan of discussing some subjects of the Program of Studies a year or two and then leaving them for some other subjects had given place to the permanent organization of sections. In some ways, this resulted in a loss. The following sections continued from 1910 to the present time: Superintendents and Principals (under the name of Administrative), Biology, Agricultural, Classics, Commercial, Domestic Science, English, Manual Arts, Mathematics, Physical Science, Social Science, Modern Language. In 1911, the Geography section which had not been on the program for two years appeared again and became a permanent section. A Music Section was organized in the same year. In 1912, a conference of County Superintendents and Village Principals was called to meet at the Friday morning session, at 9 A. M. From this conference, a permanent section was organized which had a morning session only, until





1919. In 1919 and 1920, it held both morning and afternoon sessions. In 1917, a section on Physical Education was organized.

In 1913, the afternoon session of the Administrative section was given over to the State High School Athletic Association, which, since that time, has held its annual meeting in connection with the high school conference and has used either part or the whole of the afternoon session. In 1917, the executive committee of the conference decided to ask the High School Principals' Association of Illinois to organize as the Administrative Section of the conference. This Association held a meeting on Friday, November 23, and voted to do this, and it also voted to make the officers of the association the executive committee of the section. The next meeting in 1918 adopted a new constitution. The 1918 meeting was the fifth annual meeting of the association. It, as was the state athletic association, was organized outside the Conference, but voted to join it.

In the program for 1908, the English section had the subtitle "Association of English Teachers." Although the association continued, nothing appeared upon the program after that except, "English section", until 1912. Since that date, the sub-title "The Illinois Association of Teachers of English" has been upon each program.

The language groups have shown a tendency toward further division but have not, as yet, accomplished it. In the year 1910 and 1911, for the afternoon session on Friday, Modern Language divided into two groups, called Germanic and Romance. This was repeated in 1913, 1914, but the groups were called, the German group, and the French and Spanish group. In 1915 there were three groups, the German, French, and Spanish that met the first hour of the morning session on Friday. In 1916, there was only one group. In 1917, there



were again two groups, and since that time only one.

In 1920, the Domestic Science session changed its name to Home Economics Section.

As has been stated in the discussion of the purpose, the important work of the Conference has been the formulation of syllabi, courses, and lists of various kinds, together with the discussion and revision of the same. The amount of work of this kind bulks large when listed in one group. The following table gives the character of the work, when adopted, and where it may be found.

Subject	Character	Adopted	Where found
Physics	Syllabus	1905	H. S. M. 1906-7*
Chemistry	Syllabus	1905	H. S. M. 1906-7
Algebra	Syllabus	1908	H. S. M. 1909-10
Geography	Syllabus	1908	Unknown
European History	Syllabus	Before Apr. 1910	Published separately by University
Domestic Art & Domestic Science	Syllabus	Before Apr. 1910	Published separately by University
Geometry	Syllabus	1911	Proc. 1911**
American History	Syllabus	1911	Published separately by University
Zoology	Syllabus	1912	Proc. 1912
Music	Syllabus	1913	Proc. 1913
Botany	Syllabus	1913	Proc. 1913
Geography	Syllabus for 1st. year	1913	Proc. 1913

\* H. S. M. is High School Manual.

\*\* Proc. is Proceedings of High School Conference.



Subject	Character	Adopted	Where found
Commercial	Syllabus Bookkeeping two years Syllabus Commercial Arithmetic Syllabus Commercial Geography Syllabus Commercial English Syllabus Commercial Law Syllabus Economics Syllabus Shorthand & Typewriting	1916	Proc. 1916
Geography	Syllabus for second year	1917	Proc. 1917
Botany	Outline of Lab. Course as given in Lloyd pp. 143-145	F. 1906	H.S.M. 1907-8
Zoology	Outline of Lab. Course as given in Whitney-Lucas	F. 1906	H.S.M. 1907-8
Manual Training	Outline of One Year's Course	N. 1906	H.S.M. 1907-8
Agriculture	Outline of Course	1908	H.S.M. 1909-10
Freehand Drawing	Outline of Four Years' Course	1910	H.S.M. 1911-12
Music	Outline of Course in Music for Two Years	1912	Proc. 1912
Agriculture	Outline of Course in Soils	1913	Proc. 1913
Agriculture	Outline of Course in Animal Husbandry	1913	Proc. 1913
Agriculture	Outline of Course in Horticulture	1912	Proc. 1912 but see Proc. 1913 p. 85
Agriculture	Outline of Course in Cereal and Forage Crops	1912	Proc. 1912 but see Proc. 1913 p. 85
Physiology	Outline of Course for 18 weeks	1917	Proc. 1917
Drawing or Art	Revision of Former Course	1918	Proc. 1918
Music	Outline of Course in History of Music. Does not say adopted.	-	Proc. 1919





Subject	Character	Adopted	Where found
Spanish	Minimum Requirement for Course in Spanish	1916	Proc. 1916
French	Minimum Requirement for Course in French	1916	Proc. 1916
Zoology	Minimum Essentials for Course of 18 Weeks	1917	Proc. 1917
Botany	Minimum Essentials for Course of 18 Weeks	1917	Proc. 1917
Geography	List of Books for Library	1913	Proc. 1913
Botany and Zoology	List of Books for Library	1913	Proc. 1913
Commercial	List of Books for Reference	1915	Proc. 1915
French	Minimum List of Books for Teacher and for Library	1915	Proc. 1915
Spanish	Minimum List of Books for Teacher and for Library	1915	Proc. 1915
Agriculture	Report of Committee on Text and Reference Books	1915	Proc. 1915
Latin	Report of Committee on Library Equipment	1915	Proc. 1915
Commercial	Report of Committee on Books for Library	1915	Proc. 1915
Manual Training	List of Books for Library	1915	Proc. 1915
Mathematics	List of Mathematical Works, Journals, and material	1915	Proc. 1915
Geography	Minimum List of Books for Library	1916	Proc. 1916
Manual Training	Report of Committee on Text Books	1916	Proc. 1916
German	List of Books for Reading	1916	Proc. 1916
Agriculture	Additional List of Books for Library	1916	Proc. 1916





Subject	Character	Adopted	Where found
Biology	Illustrative Material	1914	Proc. 1914
Music	List of Musical Material for Library. Not adopted but printed.	-	Proc. 1916
Biology	Minimum Essentials in Biological Apparatus and Equipment	1918	Proc. 1918
Program of Studies	Discussion in 1907		H.S.M. 1908-9
Program of Studies	Report of Committee, Suggestions pp. 29-30		Proc. 1913
Elementary Science	Regarding the Problem of, by Bagley		Proc. 1915

Much work was done in Latin and English but, since a special study is made of the work of these two subjects, no reference is made to them in the above table.

Unfortunately a complete record of the Proceedings of the High School Conference has not been published. By good luck, the record of the first conference held in February, 1905, has been preserved, but after that date nothing was published until 1910, from which time the record is complete. An abstract of the proceedings of the English section for 1909 may be found in Vol. 2, Nos. 2 and 3 of Bulletin of the Illinois Association of English Teachers. A few papers of the earlier years are also preserved in the Bulletin. A complete list of the programs has been preserved and the trend of the work may be seen, if these are examined.

It is worth while to scrutinize the Proceedings of the first Conference, to see what kind of a start was made by this organization. It is evident, that the plan of procedure at first, was to



do definite work upon three or four subjects of the curriculum, in section meetings, and then leave these and take up other subjects, until the whole curriculum had received attention. This plan was followed for a few years, but the Conference grew in a different direction and that was in the direction of the permanent organization of each section. The first conference, however, organized work in three sections, Biology, Physical Science and English. The Biology section started well for definite work by first inquiring into the objectives. J. G. Hutton of Bearstown gave a paper on, "The Main Objects to be Attained by the High School Course in Zoology". Next, Dr. A. W. Peters of the University gave an outline of work in Zoology such as might be tried out, criticized, and revised, according to proposed plan of work of the conference. Likewise in Botany, an outline was given by J. W. Little of Danville. This outline gave consideration of the place of the text, laboratory work, note book, and the compound microscope in the work. The order of procedure through the botanical material was given by Dr. C. F. Hottes of the University. Without taking into consideration the value of the outlines thus presented, it is important to note that they formed the basis for definite work, and if followed, by trial, criticism and revision, they might grow into something of more scientific value.

The Physical Science section began with an outline of experiments in Chemistry, by B. A. Sweet of Marshall. Wm. Redenbaugh of Quincy gave a paper on, "Method of Teaching Chemistry in the High School," and Charles Herman of Streator spoke on, "The Laboratory and Its Equipment for Teaching Chemistry." As to Physics, we find the first topic, "What Should be the Requirements of a Year's High School Physics?" by J. E. Cable of Harvey. Under this head was discussed the relative amount to be given to text book, laboratory work done by



the pupils, and demonstrations. Another topic discussed was, "Laboratory Manuals, Direction Sheets, Note Books, Reference Books and their Relation to Laboratory work, the Lecture and the Quiz," by F. R. Watson of the University. The last and very definite one was, "The Physical Laboratory Equipment, Its Nature and Extent", by C. H. Elliott of Centralia. Thus it may be seen that this section also made a good start along definite work in complete harmony with the general purpose of the Conference. This section took the further step in making a plan to follow up the work it had started. It appointed two committees, one for Physics and one for Chemistry, for the purpose of formulating a series of suitable experiments for the High Schools, giving (1). the minimum amount of work, (2). the order of treatment, (3). the amount of apparatus required and (4). the cost of the same, as well as a list of houses where apparatus could be purchased.

Another device, used by the Physical Science section, and also by the English section, to secure definiteness, was the passing of resolutions. After the papers had been read, and after the discussion of the mooted points which arose had been finished, resolutions were adopted which showed the crystallization of opinion arrived at by this conference. In this way, problems for the next conference were raised. The resolutions give an insight into the character of this first conference.

#### Chemistry Resolutions.

Resolved that there should be,

1. A correlation of high school and university work in Chemistry.
2. A consideration of the relation of Arithmetic to Chemistry.
3. A consideration of the method of presenting the subject,  
Chemistry.





4. A consideration of the relative amount of time devoted to the study of metals and non-metals.
5. That quantitative experiments should be introduced.
6. That qualitative analysis should be taught.
7. That some organic Chemistry should be taught.
8. That during the course fundamental chemical theories shall be introduced, and also a very general consideration of the periodic law.
9. That there shall be a judicious introduction of the description technical manufacturing processes.
10. That a good reference library be provided.

#### Physics Recommendations.

Resolved that,

1. The course of Physics in the high school be made complete within itself without regard to the object of the student after graduation.
2. That a committee be appointed to complete a set of experiments, suitable for use in the ordinary high school, and to make a list of apparatus necessary for the same.
3. That qualitative experiments be given an important place in laboratory work.

The remaining section of the first conference was the English group. Since a special study of the work of this section is given to illustrate the work of the Conference as a whole, this study will now commence. The introduction to the work of the English section will come first, then will come the English work of the First Conference, to be followed by the work of the succeeding conferences up to 1909 and 1910. From that time, the



development of the different kinds of English work will be discussed in turn.

#### THE WORK OF THE ENGLISH SECTION AS AN EXAMPLE

No section was in greater need of the Conference than the English section. The outstanding work of the Conference has been in the direction of definiteness. No subject in the high school curriculum is more indefinite than English, but not only as to the material of the subject, but also as to the methods of instruction. One of the most definite things in the English work was the list of the College Entrance Requirements, and paradoxical as it seems, it was too definite. The English work was not only indefinite but it was up in the clouds. It was dominated by its literature component, and this was the literature of the adult world of the college classes, or to be more exact the college professor. The pedagogical truism, that the material must be adapted to suit the mental life of the child, was largely overlooked by those who selected Pope for the enjoyment of the high school classes.

The indefiniteness of the English was due, to a certain extent, to the number of different subjects included under this head. English is, in reality, two distinct subjects, English Literature and English Composition. The attempt to treat them as one, to correlate the one with the other, or to make one the handmaid of the other, has increased the confusion. One of the beneficial results of the work of the English section, is that it has enabled the English teachers to analyse the material of their subject and discover that it includes literature, composition both written and oral, spelling, punctuation, letter-writing, word study and grammar. They



have discovered that there is a composition of an artistic variety and a composition of everyday life.

The work was slow in starting, but after some floundering, a start was made and the progress has been noteworthy. The aim, at the beginning, was not only very indefinite, but very lofty, and it is significant that, as the work proceeded towards definiteness, the group were willing to lower the aim. It leads one to wonder if the English teacher had not taken too much to heart Emerson's, "Hitch your wagon to a star." From a desire to have all pupils write in an artistic manner, like the old masters, and to use in turn description, narration, exposition, and argumentation, they descended to be willing to accept the "Minimum Essentials" in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This, however, has been a splendid gain because by scientific investigation the true conception of the work has been more nearly arrived at.

The work of the English section also presents a splendid example of cooperation between the college and university teachers on the one hand, and the high school teachers on the other. Fortunate, indeed, was this section to receive the constructive work of Professors, H. G. Paul, T. H. Briggs and J. M. Clapp. These, in turn, were fortunate in securing willing and intelligent coworkers among the high school teachers, whose schools furnished wide laboratories for investigation and experimentation.

The High School Visitor, no doubt, realized the indefiniteness of the English work and its lack of standardization, and in order to fix a starting point, he presented six propositions for the discussion of the first conference.

"Proposition 1. Every high school should offer four years of English and require it of all students not taking four years of





foreign language.

Proposition 2. In the early part of the course, special emphasis should be laid upon form and grammatical correctness in composition although not to the exclusion of the study of literary classics.

Proposition 3. A good manual of rhetoric should accompany the work of the entrance course, to be constantly referred to as authority.

Proposition 4. The selection of classics to be read should, as far as possible, lead the student to a pretty clear knowledge of the characteristics of the leading types of literature.

Proposition 5. For the purpose of high school instruction, the study of the history of English literature is sufficient.

Proposition 6. Throughout the high school course special attention should be given to oral composition and good oral expression in reading."

The English section made its approach to the problem through the following topics:

"The Relation of English Literature in the Grades to that in the High School."

"The Formal Study of English and American Literature."

"The Teaching of Non-Dramatic Poetry."

"Supplementary Reading."

"The Study of the Drama and The Novel."

"Theme Work."

"What Results May Be Expected from the High School Course in Rhetoric?"

The emphasis given by the program to the two kinds of English work is shown by the fact that six numbers were devoted to Literature



and two to Composition. It may also be seen, that the viewpoint was largely from the standpoint of the material of the course.

The first paper in the work of the English section is a good example of what the Conference has worked to get away from. In the first place, the speaker took the attitude of an advocate of literature, as if that were necessary. He says, "Teachers have been accustomed to justify its (English's) importance on the ground of its necessity as a medium through which knowledge is gained. It has a higher claim than this; it is an end in itself and the results are immediate." In the second place the paper is bombastic, full of high-sounding phrases, very indefinite and very theoretical. It seldom names examples of what literature should be used in the grades, but gives characteristics of this literature in the phrases of a now largely discarded psychology. A good example of the bombast, but not a hint as to how the results may be accomplished is found in this, "We have laid before us what seems to be one of the greatest duties of the teacher; for the artistic exaltation of the tastes and ideals of life are of infinitely greater service to mankind than the so-called utilitarian duties, important as they are." As to aims, there is presented this very indefinite target: "Notwithstanding that the general aim of literature, development of the appreciative faculty." Another view of evidently the same target is given by this, "The problem before us is to train the receptive faculty which on the part of the recipient corresponds to the creative faculty on the party of the literary genius."

The preparation of the teacher of English was viewed from the standpoint of the material of the subject. The first recommendation was regarding the manner of speaking and reading, the second was a list of authors with which the teacher should be familiar, and



the third was that the teacher should have a regular college course in the subject with the addition of a year of graduate work.

The paper on the "Formal Study of English and American Literature" contained a number of definite recommendations, but the most striking part is the description of the condition of the English teacher by one that had evidently been thinking of the aim of the work.

"So boundless is literature and the methods of teaching it, that the teacher is at sea, alone, with the blue sky above, blue sea underneath and all around a horizon that constantly recedes, the pursuit of which seems to bring one no nearer land which, however, may be near. In the class rooms and after school, in meditation the most of us have experienced that strange feeling of not knowing where we are. I often wonder if our students do not frequently question whether we know this thing or that, while we are studying some author. Do we know whither we go? Do we know what we are doing? Do we know what result we are seeking? Some there may be who have obtained a literary compass and chart, but I feel that many of us are drifting hither and thither with any wind that blows without our eyes upon the pole star, or without knowledge of direction or port. We need to have our eyes directed to some common goal, and to be strong to strive, to seek, to find, and not to fail."<sup>1</sup>

Also on the same subject, later in the Conference, Professor Baldwin said, "No study pursued in high school or college is so disorganized pedagogically as English. This is partly because no study is taught with so comprehensive a purpose."

Almost every paper of this first conference brings out the fact that the English work in the high schools was far above the heads of the pupils, and was organized upon the basis of the English

1. A. H. Gilmer, "School and Home Education", Apr. 1905, pp. 335-6.





work in college. The English work in college has a logical organization from the standpoint of the material. Mr. Whitford in discussing "The Teaching of Non-Dramatic Poetry" stated, "By this method pupils will know that the great developing body of English poetry begins somewhere and ends somewhere, that it has a soul continually progressing with history." And further, "Pupils must feel unity in the composition of poems, how Spenser unconsciously in lawlessness has definiteness of plan in the Faerie Queen; how consciously Milton gives two digressions in Lycidas which are so artistically connected with his pastoral that the elegy would be worthless without them." Obviously this is beyond the comprehension of most high school pupils.

Though the work on Composition was given only one fourth of the program, it is well to note the attitude of this first conference upon this part of the subject. Like that of Literature, the aim was lofty, vague, beyond the reach of all but a few of the most highly gifted pupils, and organized from the standpoint of the material. Professor Baldwin in giving the purpose of instruction in English in the high school said, "It is four fold: First, TO ENABLE THE STUDENT TO WRITE AND SPEAK WITH CLEARNESS, VIGOR, AND GRACE; second, to acquaint him at first hand with a few of the best literary products of English and American thought; third, to cultivate a sense of literary style; fourth, to inculcate a love of the best literature." Miss Iddings of Bloomington, gave directions for teaching high school pupils to write description and referred to the writing of exposition and argument.

One definite piece of work came out of the English section of this first conference. Miss Apgar of St. Louis gave a paper on "Supplementary Reading" and, upon request, furnished a list of books



for such work.<sup>1</sup> It was arranged in three groups, according to years, the first year, the second and third, and the fourth year. Under each group, there was a further subdivision according to type, poetry, fiction, prose, essay or biography. This was one definite thing that could be tried out, criticized and revised. It was the basis of recommendations for supplementary reading in the High School Manual, issued the year of 1906-07. The list in the Manual differed from Miss Apgar's list in that fourteen of her list were omitted from the Manual. These were noticeably the more difficult or less interesting. This list continued to be recommended in the High School Manual for sever years. The English section, as did the Physical Science section, drew up a list of resolutions. The list was very long, sixteen in all, and some of a very excellent character, which much later in the history of the Conference were brought up for discussion. One asked from the Committee of the College Entrance Requirements for more freedom in the choice of books. The one that brought definite results called for the appointment of a committee to prepare a "Progressive Course of Study in English Literature Based upon Type Forms". The committee appointed at the first meeting prepared a course, presented it for discussion at the second meeting of the Conference, February, 1906. It was adopted and printed in the High School Manual the following September.<sup>2</sup> It continued in the High School Manuals of 1907-08 and 1908-09.

At the second conference in February, 1906, the English section discussed the following subjects:

"Course in English Literature Prepared by Committee."

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1. Miss Apgar, "Proceedings of High School Conference", 1905, pp.16-19

2. Course in English Literature, "High School Manual", 1906-07.



"Fourth Year English in Its Relation to Freshman College Work."

"Method in High School Rhetoric."

In this program, it may be seen that two-thirds was devoted to Literature and one third to Rhetoric. In the third conference held in November, 1906, there was no English section. In the fourth, held in 1907, the topics were,

"Where only Three Years of English are Required for College Entrance, What is the Best Course to Offer for a Fourth Year of Elective English?"

"What May Be Offered in High Schools in the Way of (a) Public Speaking, (b) Debate, (c) Dramatic Presentation?"

"The Relation of English History to the Teaching of English Literature."

The most important action taken by this section in 1907 was the move for a permanent organization to be known as "The Illinois Association of Teachers of English". This came from a general feeling that a continuous organization would be able to accomplish more than an intermittent one. A committee was appointed to report a constitution. At the 1908 conference, a short constitution was adopted in which the object of the association is stated thus: "Its aim shall be to foster the advancement and proper consideration of the study of English Literature and Composition in the schools and colleges of Illinois." A second important step was taken at the 1908 conference when it was decided to issue a series of bulletins, for the expressed purpose of a definite formulation of a course of study of English for secondary schools. The purpose of such a course was to promote greater uniformity in the curricula of the various







secondary schools. Thus, the English section, after floundering for a number of years, began to move in the direction of definite work. Of course, it could not clear itself entirely of the rhapsodies of a certain type of English teacher, but these became fewer and fewer. Definite investigation of actual facts and conditions took the place of the mere opinion almost uniformly initiated in the English section, with the phrase, "It seems to me".

The Bulletin was issued eight times a year, monthly from October till May. It, as a rule, announced the program of the English section of the Conference, reported the meeting, and published papers of merit, delivered at the Conference. It announced the plans of the group and kept the teachers in close touch with the work by reminding them, eight times a year, by means of some interesting article bearing upon the actual work of the English teacher. In addition to the work of the Conference, discussions of different phases of the work were collected from sources outside of the Conference program. It served as a medium to keep the English teachers in touch with what other English groups were doing. A copy was distributed free to each English teacher who was registered and to all others whose names might be secured. A copy was also sent to each high school principal.

The Conference of 1909 may be said to have started the definite work in English. A very valuable report was made by Professor Paul as chairman of the committee on, "Outlining a Course of Study". The report was largely the work of Professor Paul who sent out a questionnaire to the teachers of the state and, from time to time, sought advice from other members of the committee. No account of the work of the English section is complete unless it includes this report of Professor Paul. It was a survey of the field. It cleared



the ground and raised a number of questions for solution. The questions raised occupied the section for a number of years, and upon some of them definite scientific work has been done.

#### Professor Paul's Report

The field was first divided into that of Composition and Literature. These questions were raised:

##### Composition.

"1. Shall an attempt be made to correlate Composition and Literature?"

"2. To what extent should other teachers take part in teaching Composition?"

"3. What proportion of time at our disposal shall be given to Composition and what to Literature?"

There was found to be an almost common agreement among teachers of three-fifths to Literature and two-fifths to Composition. The committee were also in agreement in this matter.

"4. How may this time be distributed?" There was wide difference of opinion on this, although all might be brought to agree to one of these two plans:

"A. Two days a week to Composition and three to Literature."

"B. Two semesters given wholly to Composition, one in the first year and one in the third year. The remaining time given to Literature with some writing once a week."

In the discussion of this question, one of the great faults of the Composition work was pointed out, that the pupils do not feel that they are



making progress, that they never feel that they have completed or mastered anything in Composition.

"5. Shall grammar be included in the composition and if so when, and what shall be its nature?"

"6. Shall there be placed in the fourth year a special course in spelling, punctuation, and letter writing to meet the demands of the business man?"

"7. Shall a distinct course in public speaking be introduced?"

#### Literature.

"1. Shall a text book in English Literature be used?"

Almost all answer this in the affirmative.

"2. What shall be the method of using it?" The committee believed in dividing the work into great periods and centering the work around great names.

"3. Shall a text be used for American Literature?"

"4. What classics shall be selected?" The committee believed in the College Entrance Requirements as a basis and gave reasons. It also gave some general rules for selecting a book.

#### General Rules for Selecting a Book.

"i. It must have intrinsic worth."

"ii. It must be teachable."

"iii. There should be samples of the different types.

Epic	Lyric and Narrative Poetry
Drama	Essay
Novel	Oration

"iv. It must be representative of great periods and great authors.





"v. Some American works should be included."

"vi. The book must be suited to the age of the pupil."

"5. At what place in the course, shall the various books be used after all selections have been made?"

"6. To what books on the College Entrance Requirements' list have objections been made most frequently?"  
Professor Paul reported "Vicar of Wakefield", "Midsummer Night's Dream", Milton's Minor Poems for study", and "Speech on Conciliation".

"7. How many classics shall be studied a semester?"

"8. What is the tendency in the selection of books?"

The finding was that there was a tendency towards fewer selections for study and a greater use of supplementary reading.

"9. How far shall the instructor attempt to correlate the work with other subjects?"

Professor Paul gave some discussion of each question, and the opinions of teachers and members of the committee were given when they could be secured. More important than the report was the raising of definite problems upon which the section could work. Following the report a number of these problems were discussed. These discussions showed the section to be slowly working toward definiteness and forming plans to get data upon which to base solutions. There is evidence that many conservatives were present. They gave the old arguments for the traditional courses and methods, with no evidence to support, but mere opinion, invariably introduced by the weak and apologetic phrase, "It seems to me". The most fruitful discussion centered about, "A Special Course in Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and



Oral Composition" and "The Selection of Books from the Required List".

To illustrate that the leaders of the English section were calling for definiteness, below is given what Mr. McConn said concerning a special course in Grammar, Punctuation etc.

"'A Special Course' -- at the least a little more specialization within our field seems to me one of our crying needs. At present, we teach only 'English', meaning by that magic word first of all criticism, in the sense of intelligent appreciation, and then composition, the two 'simultaneously'; during a part of the course, we include the history of English literature, or of American literature, or both, also 'simultaneously'; and, if a proposition now freely advocated is adopted, we shall add English and American history, perhaps general history and civics, to the team we have to drive. All these 'simultaneously'. In the meantime, there are grammar, punctuation, and spelling, together with oral reading, a good deal of biography, and perhaps word-study, to be taught 'incidentally'. 'Simultaneously' and 'incidentally'-- behind these pet words of ours, lie the roots of our inefficiency. We are continually trying to do from six to ten things at once. That is one reason, too, why English classes, not being able to see what they are doing or where they are heading, are so often discontented with the subject; and one reason, finally, for our general failure in results, complained of on every side by business men, newspapers and parents."

The course that Mr. McConn called for, is the course that the work of the Conference took. The tendency was to analyze the material of English and to define its different parts more accurately. This paper will follow the development of the different lines of work separately, but the unifying principles throughout all the



development is the growth toward definiteness.

In the early programs, the Literature received the major attention. In the latter programs, the Composition received the major attention. This was in line with the English development elsewhere. In the discussion of composition, oral composition was first advocated prominently by Professor J. M. Clapp in the April Bulletin of 1910. It is in the discussion and development of oral composition that some of the most distinctive work has been done by this section. That Professor Clapp looked away from the artistic material of the classics long enough to see the pupils that are usually found in the high school classes is evidenced when he said, "We may admit, perhaps, that some blind feeling for artistic form in speech and writing is instinctive, one of the 'inalienable rights' but we must admit also, I fear, that with most persons, everywhere, the instinct is well-nigh smothered by anti-literary, anti-artistic environment." He gave arguments for two kinds of oral work, oral composition or, as he named it talking, and oral reading. His argument was as follows:

"I believe that in this work we have been for a generation neglecting a most important means. We have been trying to teach writing, but we have omitted almost wholly to teach talking. We have been making our pupils analyze masterpieces of literature, but we have neglected a very obvious means of interpreting these books. While we have been trying to explain to our classes the diction and the sentence-structure, the plotting and the character-drawing, the moral and the aesthetic significance of the great and subtle works, composed with cunning manipulation of language, with severest observance of the idiomatic laws of our difficult speech, have we not too often forgotten that our pupils have but slight command of the spoken







language on which this elaborate superstructure called literature is built? Their own talk, which they picked up at home and which serves them through the day, is rough and careless, filled with slang and vulgarisms. If they do not talk correctly and gracefully, if they have only that rude instinctive sense of the artistic attributes of speech, how can they write? How can they appreciate the art of elaborate written language? Would they not be aided if they were given instruction in spoken language, as careful and as intelligent as is the instruction in writing? Is it wise to leave one entire side of literature study in the hands of the elocutionists? One is reminded of the plea of the old divine for the improvement of the music in the churches, that he did not want the devil to have all the good tunes." "Oral exercises help the student to use language idiomatically and to recognize the idiomatic element in literature. Exercise in talking helps him to write better, and exercise in reading aloud helps him to read books with a quicker and more intimate comprehension."

At the Conference of 1910, a committee appointed to investigate public speaking reported upon the status of public speaking in Illinois high schools and gave recommendations. As a rule, it was found that little or no public speaking was being done and the committee made the following recommendations:

"I. It is the sense of this Association that every Illinois high school should make some provision for training its pupils in the proper oral use of the English language.

"II. It is desirable, that teachers of English should themselves be fitted to give instruction in oral English, though there is no serious disadvantage in leaving such work to a special teacher, provided, that it be closely correlated to the work in written



composition and literature.

"III. It is highly desirable, that all high school teachers of whatever subjects, should lay especial emphasis upon clearness and correctness in reading and reciting.

"IV. At least one-fifth of the high school work in English should be devoted to oral composition and reading aloud, with particular reference to the correction of faults in articulation, pronunciation, and voice quality.

"V. It is recommended, that in all institutions fitting teachers to give instruction in high school English, courses in reading and speaking be required as a pre-requisite to endorsement for positions.

"VI. This Association is in hearty sympathy with other public speaking activities within the school, such as debates, declamation and oratorical contests, dramatic performances, literary society work, etc., provided always, that they be under the supervision of teachers, and that they be conducted sanely and without artificiality and affectation.

"VII. It is believed that inter-high school contests, including debates, and oratorical and declamation contests, present grave dangers, but that if carefully superintended and strictly limited in number, they may be found to answer the double purpose of affording training in public speaking and lightening the over-emphasis likely to be placed upon athletic contests."

Between the 1910 and 1911 meetings, the Bulletin published, in April, a very important and influential paper. It was a report on "English Composition Teaching" by a committee of the Modern Language Association. This committee had used the scientific procedure in collecting data from many widely distributed sources concerning



composition teaching. Its results were startling. After the discussion of years concerning the amount of time to be given to composition, whether devoting two days a week, or two-fifths of the time as advocated in some other manner, this report revealed that the English teachers had not been giving this amount of time to Composition. It was an impossibility. The outstanding fact of the report was that the English teachers, strive as they might, even to the point of physical exhaustion, could not grade the papers in the Composition work. The establishment of this fact alone called for an entire revision of the Composition work and accounted for much of the failure to get good results. To the question, in the investigation, "What is done with the excess manuscripts that cannot be read?" the following answers were given:

- a. Skim it mostly.
- b. Credit it unread.
- c. Destroy it.
- d. Use it for general class discussion.
- e. Turn it over to readers to grade.

It is easy to see that every solution offered is unworthy. Teachers must find some way to require less written work. The question has been raised, "Can oral work largely replace the written work in Composition?"

An experiment on composition was arranged by a committee of the English section with J. M. Clapp as chairman. It reported at the Conference of 1913. The material of a semester's course in composition was arranged in such a way that one section of a first year English class might carry on the work as written composition and another section might carry on practically the same work as two-thirds oral and one-third written. This was a very interesting





experiment and will be discussed later under the topic "Scientific Investigations". The result, as will be seen, however, gave an added argument for oral composition.

In this course in oral composition, however, the authors could not wholly give up the type forms of narration, description, and exposition. Still, after the experiment had been tried, this recommendation was made: "The method should be in the early years at least, to say little about rhetorical distinctions regarding the four kinds of composition: narration, description, exposition and argumentation. In the first year at least, it does not matter whether the boys and girls know the words, narration, description, etc., at all." The secretary of the Association, Professor Baldwin, went one step further. He said, "I would have the teacher go further than the suggestion of the committee, that the teacher should not bother the pupils the first year with the forms of discourse. I would have them throw formal rhetoric to the winds and instead give the pupil constant practice in the oral expression of ideas acquired by attentive reading of a carefully selected list of weekly periodicals."

The next development of the oral composition movement was to give attention to the mechanics of speech. At the Conference of 1914 Professor J. M. Clapp spoke upon, "The Speaking Voice". "Teachers of English", he said, "are at last approaching one part of their duty which is most fundamental, but which they have generally shirked, the improvement of the speech of their pupils". The next suggestion made by Professor Clapp was about 'oral forms'. It is a novel idea. He took the training of the telephone girl as an example. She is given a certain number of answers to apply to the questions that come to her most frequently. These are well framed answers and she is



trained to enunciate the words distinctly in a pleasant tone of voice. "Why not", Mr. Clapp asked, "help our pupils organize and give them drill in oral forms to answer much of the routine affairs of life?"

Oral speaking called for training, not only during the class recitation, but outside of it. It was necessary to enlist the aid of the other teachers, and even that of the home. A consideration of this leads to the "Minimum Essentials", "Better English Week" and related subjects which are discussed under another topic.

The report of Professor Paul at the Conference of 1909, has been referred to as one that raised many questions, and as one that gave the direction of the work into the field of scientific investigation. Following this, at what seems to have been the fit time for such a paper, Professor Bagley gave, at the opening of the 1910 Conference, a paper entitled, "Science as Related to the Teaching of Literature". He advocated the application of scientific principles to the teaching of English and he emphasized especially the importance of securing data for the solution of problems. "Data", he asserted, "should be secured by testing under conditions of control." This paper awakened much interest and discussion. Mr. McConn was asked to present a definite problem, capable of solution by the co-operative statistical method described by Professor Bagley. This action shows that the English section had found their bearings and were fulfilling in a very excellent manner the purpose of the Conference.

Mr. McConn proposed his problem and secured the promise of cooperation from a large number of teachers. Much had been said concerning what classics should be read in the English course. Mr. McConn's proposal was simply to find out the pupils opinion concerning



the books which they had read. The teachers were asked to take ten or fifteen minutes time with their classes, sometime near the close of the first semester, and ask the pupils to rank in order of their preference the three or four books studied during the semester. This was to be repeated near the close of the second semester. The report of Mr. McConn upon this investigation was the important topic of the 1911 Conference. After throwing out all that did not suit conditions, Mr. McConn had rankings from 5,803 students from 209 high school classes, which were tabulated and interpreted very carefully by him. His work is a splendid example of the application of scientific method to the securing and the interpreting of data.

The most important result of his work was the selection of two groups, those that were ranked highest, and those that were ranked lowest. The first ten books in order of their ranking were given first by from one-third to one-half of those that read them and last by from one-tenth to one-seventh.

Table of First Ten with Percentage as to Rank

Tale of Two Cities	89%
Last of Mohicans	87%
Ivanhoe	83%
Hamlet	82%
Enoch Arden	81%
Silas Marner	80%
Macbeth	79%
Lady of the Lake	77%
Merchant of Venice	74.5%
Idyls of the King	73.5%





The last twelve books were ranked first by from one-tenth to one-seventh and last by from one-third to one-half.

Table of Last Twelve Books With Percentage as to Rank

De Coverly Papers	59%
Illiad	58.5%
Twelfth Night	58%
Palgrave	54%
Chaucer	54%
Franklin's Autobiography	53%
Macaulay's Johnson	52.5%
Deserted Village	52%
Ancient Mariner	52%
Sesame and Lillies	51.5%
Essay on Burns	50%
Emerson's Essays	48%

Mr. McConn then raised the question, "Is there, then, any characteristic that is common to those ten diverse books at the top?" "Is there a common characteristic to be found in the twelve books of the other group?" "Are these two groups by any chance antipodal?" He suggested, that the popular books in this list were uniformly books containing vivid and dramatic presentations of human life with strong ethical import while those that were distinctly disliked were those in which the primary appeal was aesthetic, stylistic, and those which conveyed their message indirectly through their beauty or their humor, or which presented human life not with bold plainness but delicately, lightly, subtly.

There was a stirring discussion of the value of the report. Mr. McConn was asked if he thought the opinion of the pupils should



be regarded to such an extent that the list should be modified. He replied that he would drop the last twelve from his reading list. There was strong opposition to this but Mr. McConn replied with strong counter argument. The value of his report, however, does not lie so much in the interpretation, which is open to difference of opinion, as in the definite data.

The result of the next investigation was reported to the Conference in 1912 by W. W. Hatfield, chairman of a committee appointed to make the investigation. The work was similar to that done by Mr. McConn, but it was not so simple. The answers could not be so clear cut and chances for error due to a larger field investigated were greater.

Three questions were sent to high school graduates. A number of the high school teachers cooperated in the sending and the gathering of the answers. The questions were, "1. What parts of your high school training in speaking or writing English have been of most use to you in your business or social relations or in future study? 2. What parts have been of little use to you in these ways? 3. Has your experience shown that there was something left out of your training that should have received greater emphasis? If so, what?"

A careful study of the report will reveal many things, but the following are some of the most striking revelations: The pupils believed that the most benefit was received from those things that furnished them with the practical training for life. These were believed to be grammar, punctuation, spelling and the choice of words. Letter writing occupied a high place and greater value was placed on oral than on written composition. Strongest disapproval was expressed for long themes, rewriting, dictation, and the study



of models.

No one would say that, what the graduates think about their own work, should be the only thing considered, but in solving the problems of English, a body of definite data such as given in the above report should be taken into consideration along with other data.

Another question was asked, the replies to which shed some light upon a question that received much discussion in some of the earlier conferences. It was concerning the relative amount of time given to composition and to literature. At that time, a resolution was adopted based entirely upon the opinion of the teachers, giving two-fifths time to composition and three-fifths time to literature. The question was, "Do you think the division of time between composition and literature is the best possible. Twenty-four asked for more literature, forty-one thought that no change was needed, and one hundred and thirteen wanted more composition.

The important work in English of the 1913 conference was the report by Professor J. M. Clapp of the experiment of trying out a definite course in oral composition in the second semester of the first year. In another section, the usual work in written composition was to be carried on. The work of the two sections was to be tested by four test themes written at different times in the semester, and by the opinions of the teachers. Enough teachers tried the experiment to show results. A longer use of the work by teachers that had gained experience would no doubt show more striking results. The report is valuable because the test papers furnish a mass of definite data. It has been turned over to the Department of Education and it may be worked over again for further deductions.

The committee made the following suggestions:





"1. That oral composition combined with written composition be adopted as a regular part of the English work throughout the high school course, the proportion of written and oral themes to be, in general in the first year, two thirds oral and one third written, the written themes generally to be made from previously given oral themes; in the second year, one half oral and one half written; in the third and fourth years, one third oral and two thirds written.

"2. That regular allowance be made by the school authorities in the daily session for time for oral conferences equivalent to five minutes weekly per pupil. This is not an extravagant demand to make upon school authorities. But it would relieve the teacher of the greater part of manuscript correction at home. The result would appear at once to be more vitality and better work on the part of the teacher. The general improvement of the pupil's writing, speech, and interest in their studies would soon be noticed by the parents and bring the approval of the school authorities.

"3. That as to the content of the composition program, the method should be, in the earlier years at least, to say little about rhetorical distinctions regarding the four kinds of composition: Narration, description, exposition and argumentation, but rather through all the forms in a series of exercises planned to fit in with the pupils natural interest. In the first year, at least, it does not matter whether the boys and girls know the words, narration, description, etc. at all. The point is to keep them thoughtfully interested in a series of real little problems--definite problems, each with a definitely conceived topic--connected with their own life in school and out."

Four other suggestions were offered by the committee: "(a) That large use should be made of the group method and group rivalry



especially in the first and second years. (b) That large use should be made of narrative-expository and descriptive-expository exercises (descriptions and explanations that are of real objects and familiar processes of daily life) in the first and second years. (c) That large use be made of dramatic and dialogue exercises, particularly in the second and third years, but also in a simple form in the first year. (d) That aesthetic exercises and what are often called incorrectly, 'imaginative' exercises, ('fancy narratives and descriptions') should be used sparingly, rather to give variety to the work and by way of reward of special merit in the pupil than as the regular substance of any part of the course."

The committee felt that the three questions raised by the problems had been answered.

The relative amount of labor entailed upon the teacher by work in oral and by work in written composition was shown to be less for oral. It was evident that experience in oral composition would enable the teacher to make the labor even less in oral composition.

"To what extent is proficiency in oral composition carried over into written?" It is carried over, more than written is carried into oral.

That the other benefits of oral are sufficiently great to warrant the subject being introduced.

It will also be seen that the tendency to pay little attention to the forms of discourse is marked.

The session of 1914 was occupied with another piece of scientific work. This was an investigation of the preparation of high school teachers of English. While fruitful and opening up many problems, it lacked in definiteness what some earlier investigations revealed. A questionnaire was sent out but the answers to several



questions called for opinion, which is not a very definite thing upon which to base a scientific investigation. It revealed that,

"1. Most of the institutions of higher learning in Illinois were not doing a great deal towards preparing students as special teachers of English and that they might well be asked to consider whether it were desirable and feasible for them to undertake more extensive and systematic work of this character.

"2. That almost every thing in the teachers' college course in English may and very often did prove of value to him in the classroom; but, that the greatest help has come from general survey courses, Shakespeare, American literature courses for teachers, and courses in composition.

"3. These teachers have found that among their courses other than English, their work in history has been of greatest value; next, their work in foreign languages, especially in Latin; and that their courses in philosophy and education have also proved helpful. Fewer of them testified as to the value of political and physical sciences.

"4. Those who have taken courses in education requiring practice teaching have, generally speaking, found them very helpful; and a large majority of them favor such courses for teachers of English, to be given preferably by a member of the department of English. The majority of them also believed that such a course would be equally helpful in literature and in composition. There was no general agreement as to whether such a course would prove most helpful after, before, or during a period of actual teaching experience. Different answers emphasized the peculiar value of such work at various stages of progress.

"5. Of the possible additions to the college curriculum, desirable for teachers of English, the chief demands were for five





courses: (a) an advanced survey of English literature; (b) a course in primitive literature; (c) a course in comparative literature; (d) one in contemporary English and American literature; (e) a course in oral reading.

"6. As an irreducible minimum for the teacher of English, the consensus of opinion favored the required of the bachelor's degree from some reputable college. The necessity at least of courses in a survey of English literature, in Shakespeare, and American literature, in public speaking, and in something beyond freshman composition was emphasized. Especially notable too was the insistence upon an ampler training in history, languages, philosophy, and education and upon the continuous growth of whoever would succeed as a teacher of English."

The topic for investigation of the 1915 conference was a "Questionnaire on the Material Equipment of the High School for English." The questionnaire revealed what its authors think should be the material equipment and, as such, repays reading. It also brought out the general fact that the material equipment was very inadequate. It was a valuable contribution but not so vital as other investigations.<sup>1</sup>

The English section, from time to time, took some notice of the attempt to set up scales to measure the products of education. The topic concerning scales for measuring composition work has been upon several programs. One of the important results of the English Conference came as a by-product of an attempt to work out a set of themes as a scale for the work in ninth year composition. Miss Isabel McKinney of Charleston at the 1915 meeting reported upon this

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1. W. M. Smith, "Proceedings of High School Conference", 1915, pp.196 to 202.



attempt which had been made by a group of English teachers. The attempt proved again how widely teachers vary in grading papers. To lessen this variation a set of minimum essentials was made. The set of minimum essentials was what attracted attention. Here was something definite in composition. Here was an outcome, which suited the tendency toward which the section had been working. The next year Miss McKinney, who with a group of teachers had been working on the subject, presented a further development of the idea of minimum essentials. She has requirements for the ninth and tenth grades. It was proposed that, after the pupils had had time to learn the requirements for their respective years, every theme handed in that did not conform to these elementary requirements be marked failing. In this way the pupil might know why he failed and might easily avoid the error. Thus, the teacher would not be compelled to correct the same mistake over and over; and thus, the pupil would have something definite in composition to master. The Conference after making a few changes, adopted the "Minimum Essentials"<sup>1</sup> and the minimum essentials idea. As important and as essential, as the adoption of the minimum requirements, was the necessity of obtaining a wide-spread use of them. In 1917, a committee was appointed to urge the schools to adopt and use a common set of definite and elementary minimum essentials. For this reason the topic has been included under the head of English propaganda. The University had a large number of copies printed and furnished them to the schools at cost. The distribution has been very large and it is too early, as yet, to estimate the influence of this work.

It has been realized for a long time, that the English teachers needed the cooperation of the principals, superintendents, and

1. Bulletin of Illinois Association of Teachers of English. Oct. 1916



the other teachers. In the campaign for the adoption of the Minimum Essentials was included the request that the entire faculty require the observance of these essentials in all written work.

The next step in English propaganda was the observance of Better English Week. This, also, called for the cooperation of the entire faculty and of the student body. In places, the homes, newspapers, and civic organizations were enlisted. Details of the plan were published in Bulletins.<sup>1</sup> This is properly called propaganda because the work must be made to look desirable to the pupils and other teachers. An atmosphere of spirit must be developed that is favorable to securing better results in English.

After the Better English Week had been observed for several years, and in many places, Professor Paul called the attention of the group to the importance of drill. He urged that Better English be prolonged from a week to the whole term. He insisted that it must be persisted in until the result is habit. He suggests as a motto, "Get that habit."

The influence of the idea of Minimum Essentials has been remarkable. In an editorial of the Bulletin of October, 1919, Professor Paul says, "One of the most valuable things done by the Association is the adoption of a set of Minimum Essentials in Forms for written work in the ninth and tenth years." The idea has extended to other work. In an outline of the English Curriculum for the Oak Park High School published in the Bulletin in 1920, is a list of minimum essentials for not only composition but also for grammar, memorization, and spelling, for not merely two years, but for the entire four years.

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1. Bulletin; Association of Teachers of English, Vol. 10, No. 4, Jan. 1918. Also Vol. 11, No. 5, Feb. 1919.





Another unique way to spread propaganda for Better English was the use of plays for this purpose. The Bulletin has produced three, which may be easily produced by members of the English classes and which invariably arouse interest in the subject. They are,

"The People of the State of Illinois vs. The Four Verb Brothers."<sup>1</sup> by H. D. F. Widger.

"An Adaptation of Pandora's Box to Enforce Better Speech",<sup>2</sup>  
by Nila Banton Smith.

"Every Student's Progress",<sup>3</sup> by H. D. F. Widger.

Attention has been called to the work of Professor Paul in "Outlining a Course of Study." He presented to the English teachers, through the Bulletin, three other papers of such value that as a group they should be preserved for the instruction of the English teachers. These papers are, "The Teaching of Lyric Poetry", "The Study of the Novel", and "The Study of the Drama". While all are very valuable, the first, "The Teaching of Lyric Poetry" probably is need more by the English teachers than are the other two, because the teaching of lyric poetry is characterized more, than are the others, by indefiniteness. He showed that to teach the lyric one must make careful study, and this may be the chief reason why many teachers have not succeeded with Palgrave. He advocated a grouping or classification of the lyrics. It is better if the teacher will make this herself, rather than accept that of another. Then the teacher should give a hint in each lyric of some distinctive thing to arouse interest. Mr. Paul gave many illustrations of this and also showed how a highly trained instructor with a knowledge of

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1. H. D. F. Widger: Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English.

2. Smith, Nila Banton: Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English,  
November, 1920.

3. H. D. F. Widger: Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English. May '21



technique, fine appreciation, wide experience and fund of knowledge might cause pupils to like and enjoy that finest flower of our literature, lyric poetry.

As did almost all the sections, the English likewise made list of materials which are valuable for workers. Professor E. S. Jones of the University in three papers, in three different issues of the Bulletin,<sup>1</sup> gave discussions concerning choosing subjects for themes. The most valuable part of his papers were the lists of subjects given. In his first paper he gave a list of one thousand subjects as an answer to the question, "What Shall One Write About?" In his second he gave five hundred ten subjects for description and in his third he gave six hundred fifty six subjects for narration.

Mr. F. K. W. Drusy gave a list of short stories.<sup>2</sup> It is a good piece of work for reference. It shows a tendency to use a wider range of material and also to use more contemporary material. Its classification as to time and as to the nationality of the author is helpful. There are two hundred eighty titles listed.

Professor Paul was asked by the English section in 1913 to make a list of books for high school English.<sup>3</sup> He furnished an excellent list arranged under different heads. Some books which are especially desirable were starred once, some others most desirable and essential were double starred. His list of contemporary writers is especially valuable because here the English teacher, is often at sea. His list contained five hundred seventy five titles. Mr. F. K. W. Drusy also in the next issue of the Bulletin gave a list of

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1. (a) E. S. Jones: Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English. Jan., 1915. (b) Ibid, October, 1915. (c) Ibid, April, 1917.

2. F. K. W. Drusy: Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English, May, 1916.

3. Paul, H. S. "Bulletin of Illinois Teachers of English", Jan. 1917.



some of the best dramas.<sup>1</sup> It contains two hundred sixty three titles and made a good supplement to Mr. Paul's list.

In 1915 a committee, through its chairman, Mr. W. M. Smith, gave a report upon the "Material Equipment of the High School for English."<sup>2</sup> This included a list, not only of books but of every kind of material that might be used to advantage.

The English section did some work worth while about the subjects of Spelling, Written Composition, Grammar, and Literature. The enrollment of this section has been the largest of the Conference. The meetings have been enthusiastic, and the influence wide. The following comments show to a limited extent the character and influence of the section.

Mr. F. W. Mozier in reporting concerning the National Council of Teachers of English said,

"The National Council of Teachers of English is only two years old and has already started nation wide investigations and experiments, and our own Association has been a pioneer in the scientific study of English problems."

Professor Baldwin in referring to the Association's investigation concerning the comparative value of oral and written composition spoke as follows:

"Dr. Clapp has done a piece of work that will not only reflect credit upon the Illinois Association of Teachers of English but will mark an epoch in the educational progress of composition teaching throughout our secondary schools."<sup>5</sup>

Miss Nila B. Smith speaking of the work of the section to new teachers said, "To these novitiates we would say that we are proud of the record of the Illinois Association of Teachers of

1. Drusy, F. K. W. Bulletin of Ill. Teachers of English, Feb. 1, 1916  
2. Smith, W. M. Proceedings of High School Conference. 1915 pp.196-202  
3. Baldwin, E. C. Ibid, 1913. p. 162.





English for during the past fifteen years it has been a pioneer in many of the movements for improving the teaching of our subject. It has been an association of workers and has thus been able to accomplish much which could never have been brought to pass without united, untiring, enthusiastic effort."

#### THE WORK OF THE LATIN SECTION

The Latin section, unlike the English, seemed to have had no difficulty in getting started. It began with a discussion of the aims of the work and appointed, soon after the organization of the section, a committee to report upon the first year Latin work. This was followed by a report upon each of the other years in succession, thus, working over the entire field.

The Latin section from first to last has evidently felt itself to be upon the defensive, and many of its discussions contain propaganda for the subject. In a way, this is a good thing for the subject and its teachers because in the end worthy objectives will be found, if there be any, and unworthy and false objectives will be detected. One wonders if it would not be a good thing for every subject to be called upon to defend itself as strenuously as has Latin. On the other hand, it is hard for propagandists to look upon things with a scientific attitude of mind. For this reasons, the aims are confused, the discussions are colored, and the work hindered. The subject has been given us by tradition and some of the arguments in favor of the subject are traditional ones, unsupported by a scientific foundation, but strongly supported by the reiteration of many years. The real work of the section is entangled and intermixed with propaganda and traditional statements.



In the 1911 report of the committee upon the first year work in Latin, the committee felt and stated that Latin teachers should not only teach the subject but should use propaganda for it. In closing its report, the committee made eleven aims and resolutions. While the majority of these seem perfectly legitimate, the first, third and eighth possess doubtful value. The first was, "To attract to the Classics a larger number of our fifty thousand high school pupils." The third was, "To so fully imbue with the classical spirit those who do go, that they will continue the study of the Classics in college". The eighth recommendation shows how curiously the idea of propaganda may be mingled with the other material of the subject. To the first part, no one should disagree, "We suggest the importance of good English in all translation and that it be rigidly demanded". Following that, however, came this peculiar statement, "There is a great opportunity here for promoting culture as well as popularizing the study in the minds of the general public".

In 1914 Miss Sheehan of Springfield, gave a report of the views of high school graduates regarding the value of their training in Latin. Upon the face of it, this looks like a scientific investigation. But the questionnaire was sent to those who had taken three or more years of the subject and who, consequently, had a fondness for it. And furthermore an examination of the important questions asked reveals the fact that they are leading questions.<sup>1</sup> In the replies almost all the old reasons advanced for the study of Latin were mentioned and, whether legitimate or not, they sound like echoes from the Latin teacher. This is a good example of the difficulty encountered by the propagandist in attempting a scientific investigation.

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1. Sheehan, Shara E. Proceedings of H. S. C. 1914, p. 127



After much good work had been done, the 1917 session seemed to have lost connection with what had gone before and to have fallen back into the propaganda spirit. T. J. McCormack gave a long philosophical address in trying to prove the value of Latin by assertion. The title of a paper by Miss Nita Robinson reflected a similar spirit, "Latin Not a Dead But a Living Language." The kind of proof given by her to support the cause hardly showed the scientific spirit. She said, "But despite the criticisms against it, we, as Latin teachers can point with some degree of pride to the statistics which estimate that at least one half million students put forth conscientious efforts to know and appreciate Latin." What do the pupils know about its value before they try it? It is in the course by tradition and recommended to them as a good subject with which to train the mind. Further, she said, "Such a statement (a derogative one) is ruinous to the efforts of teachers who give of their ability in order that Latin may hold its importance as a necessary factor in education." Why should any teacher give their ability to hold any subject in the curriculum if it cannot justify itself? Should not the teacher's main object be to educate children? Among other aims for the subject this one was given as number four, "To stimulate an interest that will hold the child for three more years of Latin training."

The influence which tradition still had upon the Latin section may be shown by the following statements which are, as is the propaganda, mixed up with the real work of the section. The tradition, that much hard work develops the mind, is probably the reason that teachers make as an objective what only a few of the very best can accomplish. The following is an example from the report of a committee on the second year Latin work. "1. (a) What should the teacher





of second year Latin be able to assume as accomplished in the first year? That the pupil has learned the inflectional system of the Latin language and understands thoroughly the syntax of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs; that he can readily classify subordinate clauses in English sentences; and that he has applied this knowledge to the mastery of about twenty five pages of not too easy Latin. The systematic study of the uses of the subjunctive belongs to the second year but every subordinate clause of the Latin of the first year should be classified as a preparation for this study." This is a traditional answer and a good answer to the question, "What is the matter with Latin?" The next question was, "Can he make good the deficiency if this work has not been well done? The pupil who goes into Caesar with less than this preparation invites failure. If through absence, laziness, or dulness he has failed to make the work of the first year a safe foundation for that of the second, he should repeat the first year or drop out of Latin into some other course. There is no Latin salvation for the irregular, the lazy, or the dull. The kingdom is closed to them no matter how hard the anxious teacher may strive to carry them in."

While good aims were often given, the discussion frequently pointed to the chief aim as 'read more Latin'. One committee recommended the omission of interesting material because if such were included it would not be possible to translate so much Latin. This aim was also given, even in the third year. In answer to the question, "What has the teacher of third year Latin a right to expect?" the reply is given, a. Recognize forms with ease and accuracy. b. Use grammar as a book of reference. c. Find their way through such prose as Caesar. d. Apply the principles of Latin syntax to the translation of sentences based on Caesar." This last showed the



aim. There was no thought of any value beyond that of the mastery of Latin material. This, in spite of the fact, that the majority never go beyond Caesar.

A similar aim was given by Miss Hubbard. "We are confronted in our first year work not by a theory but by a fact, by the stubborn fact that we are preparing our pupils for Caesar." In other words the aim is, to read a Latin book.

Arthur R. Crathorne of the department of Mathematics gave a paper in which he tried to show "Transfer of training" between Algebra and Latin. He should have started with an Intelligence test and probably he should have found his correlation in each case was due to intelligence instead of "transfer".

Miss Helen A. Baldwin in discussing aims said, "If we could agree that our objectives are first, culture, second, mental training, third, practical use, with emphasis in the order named--how little would be left for dispute." She did not define culture nor say, 'Whose culture.' She gave as argument for mental training, the old one which consists of the opinions of a number of educated people. This hardly meets the standard of a scientific experiment.

The committee upon second year Latin in discussing the method of presentation gave this fine tradition of the idea that hard work is good because it is hard. "The legitimate interest is based on the joy of conquest, the ability to do today what he could not do yesterday; it being our place to see that the task we set is worth while and possible."

The subject of Latin first appeared upon the Conference program in 1908 in the Foreign Language Section, which met for the first time in that year. The first subject discussed was the general one "The Unity of Purpose in the Study of Foreign Languages in High



Schools." It was presented by Professor H. J. Barton. Unfortunately, the proceedings for this year and the next were not published, and we have no knowledge of the work except what may be surmised from the program. The section, however, appears to have made a good start, because undoubtedly the aim or purpose of the work in any subject is a logical starting place for the discussion of the curriculum. In the afternoon this section divided into three groups, Classical, German and Romance. After this first Conference, the Latin group met as a separate section, under the name Classical Section.

A committee was appointed at the first meeting to work out a course for the First Year Latin. This committee reported after two years, was continued for another year, and gave the final report in 1911. The recommendations of the Committee were, "1. We recommend a thorough mastery of a small amount of Latin rather than superficial work over a larger field--your committee believes that one of the most important principles of teaching is the sense of mastery; that it is peculiarly important that those who teach highly inflected languages keep this principle ever in mind. This sense of mastery on the part of the pupil promotes interest in a remarkable degree and is acquired when the pupil is able to read connected discourse. We therefore recommend that after two or three weeks spent on forms, he be given connected discourse based on the text already studied, but that this be given in detached sentences. 2. As to pronunciation your committee recommends that after teaching the sound no great attention be given to it as a separate subject but that it be taught each day by means of intelligent oral reading of the text. 3. As to writing Latin in the first year, we recommend that it be postponed for a few weeks but that it form an important part of the





year's work because of its effectiveness in teaching accuracy in forms and constructions. Its purpose is almost solely to enforce these principles. 4. As to syntax, we suggest the importance of care, especially as the establishment of grammatical relations seems to have been left to us by the teachers of English. But there is no need of needless repetitions after the pupils have secured a clear idea. 5. We suggest the importance of good English in all translation and that it be rigidly demanded. There is a great opportunity here, for promoting culture as well as popularizing the study in the minds of the general public. 6. The possibilities of increasing interest by means of games, pictures, and lantern slides should receive the attention of every teacher of the classics. 7. As to vocabulary, we recommend that emphasis be put upon the intelligent memorizing of Latin words. As far as possible this should be done through association with the English cognate forms. 8. That the oral reading of Latin is an essential element of success."

In 1912, almost the entire program was given to the discussion of the second year work. There was a general opinion that the work for this year was too difficult. An inquiry among a number of pupils revealed these reasons. "1. Preparation of lesson took too large a proportion of time." The suggestion was made to spend one and one-half years in preparation and reduce the requirement to three or even two books of Caesar instead of four. "2. The present type of beginners books arranged on the spiral was not as good as the grammar-reader book of a generation ago. 3. Methods of teaching a. Young teachers did not know limitations of boys and girls of high school age. b. Proneness to be vague and indefinite in the assignment of the lesson of second and succeeding years. 4. Never a snap course. 5. Competition of other subjects, especially the utilitarian



ones.

A number of suggestions to aid the Latin teacher in making Caesar more interesting were in harmony with the spirit of the Conference. They were as follows: "1. Emphasis on English derivations. 2. Exhibits like Miss Sabin's of the Oak Park High School. 3. Sets of classical slides. 3. The Latin club and paper. 4. Use of quotations and mottoes. 5. Discussion of interesting points found in text and modern comparisons--such as methods of war, government, bridge building, socialism, geography, religion, etc. 6. Synopsis of different books, with supplementary English narrative so that pupils may get an understanding of the historical sequence and know what he has read."

A committee was appointed to consider the subject and report the next year. This report was given in 1913.<sup>1</sup> It is a very conservative report. Its authors seemed to have forgotten the discussion of the former year in which the general opinion arrived at, was that the work in Caesar was too hard. This committee made the amount of work large and supported its work by references to college entrance requirements, and syllabi, and courses of other bodies. In such a way is tradition passed along.

The report was organized as follows:

"1. a. What should the teacher of second year Latin be able to assume as accomplished in the first year?

b. Can he make good the deficiency if this work has not been well done?

2. The material of the second years course.

3. The Method of Presentation.

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1. Report of Committee on Second Year Latin. Proceedings of High School Conference 1913, pp. 101-103.



4. What should the teacher of third year Latin be able to assume as accomplished by the work of the second year?"

In 1914, a committee on third year Latin reported through Miss Laura E. Woodruff. The conservatives do not seem to have had so much influence in the report of this committee although the work of the other authorities are referred to. This report was considered under three divisions.

"1. Literature to be read and method of procedure.

"The regular amount of the traditional material is six specific orations of Cicero. The committee reported that Latin teachers were demanding a greater latitude of choice of material, but equal to the specified six orations in amount. The new material reported as making up part of the course at different places consisted of Cicero's Letters; Cicero's De Senectute; Sallust's Catiline and Jugurthine War; Other Orations of Cicero; Book of John; Letters of Pliny, the Younger; Terence's Phormio; Ovid. The purposes avowed were to make the pupil capable of meeting and solving questions about the Roman world and also of his own world by applying the lessons of the past; to make him capable of independent thinking, to learn various meanings of words in English. There is a suggestion to reduce the amount by as much as one oration in order to do other work more thoroughly.

"2. Systematic grammar should be studied by means of prose composition. Time may be saved if the prose follows text in words and grammar.

"3. The supplementary work is very necessary. Some knowledge of Roman history, and characters is necessary to the understanding of the literature. It also makes it more interesting."

In 1916 a report of a committee on fourth year Latin was





given by Miss Jessie I. Lummis of Normal. The outline gave a good idea of the report. Few questions were raised or left open.

"1. The first six books of the Aeneid furnish the chief reading for fourth year.

"2. The generally accepted issues of the fourth year,

Good English Translation

Vocabulary drill, work in etymology etc.

Syntax

Scansion

Sight translation

Prose composition

"3. Often neglected issues of the fourth year,

The geography of the Aeneid

The mythology of the Aeneid

The technique of the Aeneid

Some supplementary topical studies in connection with the Aeneid

Vergil's similes compared with those of Homer

Vergil's influence upon English authors

Vergil's life

The story of the last six books

The Eclogues and the Georgics

The Augustan Age

Other great epics."

Thus the four years of the Latin course were discussed and outlined. If this section should now revise these courses, using the scientific method of investigation and manipulation of data, they would follow the best tradition of the Conference.

The scientific spirit had some able exponents in this section



and dominated much of the work. Professor Lillian G. Berry of the University of Indiana made some plain statements that it behooves the Latin teachers to notice.<sup>1</sup>

"Instead of opposing the scientific educational investigator as an enemy, they should recognize him as an unprejudiced seeker after truth. Teachers of Latin must learn to substitute evidence in questions of method of teaching, for biased opinion. They must ally themselves with educational experts and make systematic measurements of results that shall become standard for the whole country. And further, in urging scientific work she quotes Professor Knapp, "There is need of testimony of actual experience based on sound educational principles, the testimony must come from many quarters, it must come in ample volume, it must extend over some years. Pupils trained in the method must be subjected to tests, not merely by those who have trained them, but by others."

Also Miss Helen A. Baldwin in giving a report of a committee on curriculum reconstruction said, "The hypothesis wherefrom we start must be, that at least our grounds for present procedure are wrong, because we do as we do for no better reason than that we were taught so--that is, tradition". She also quoted three steps in the procedure of Charters. 1. Aim of the study. 2. The subject matter that will best fulfil this aim. Order of presentation that best fits it for mastery.

In the 1920 meeting, Mr. C. W. Odell spoke on the subject, "Latin Tests". In speaking of Latin he said that not only the subject of Latin was being attacked but also the methods of teaching and the content. While the Latin tests were not perfect, the use of them would give teachers a measure of the different abilities required to master the subject. He then named and described different

1. Berry, Lillian G. "Educational Measurements and the Direct Method of Teaching Latin." Proceedings H. S. C. 1915, pp. 142-9.



tests and told how and where each one had been used and the records made by its use.

The Latin section at different times, discussed equipment and libraries and made good lists for reference.

Early in the history of the section, in 1910, Miss Alberta Clark discussed 'The Traveling Stereopticon, Its Availability and Advantages for the Small High School.' The session appointed a committee to try to get a plan started in Illinois. It is probably not too much to say that out of the discussion of this project, came the extension work put out by the University under the care of Professor H. J. Barton. This series of lantern slides illustrating the Latin work has been of great value to the schools of Illinois that have used them.

One of the most interesting exhibits of the whole Conference was the one prepared by Miss Frances E. Sabin. This was prepared in the Oak Park High School to answer the high school boy's question "What is the use of Latin?" Incidentally it was to answer the same question asked by other departments and the outside world. It was propaganda for Latin but marked as such, with plain labels. It stood out clear and was not confused with other things. It also had the element of definiteness and it offered material for criticism. The exhibit consisted of a series of cards arranged under ten different heads to show the indebtedness of English to Latin and Greek. One was a series of cartoons which required the knowledge of Latin or Greek to be understood. Another showed how references to Latin and Greek were used in advertisements, another showed references in editorials. The exhibit aroused great interest. Many came from other sections to see it.

Professor H. V. Canter gave a paper on "High School Equipment





and Publications Helpful to Teachers of Latin and Ancient History. This is a very useful list. It would be better if the more desirable were starred and the very desirable, double starred. It comprises Maps, Photographic reprints, Slides, Classical Atlases, Classical Periodicals, Latin Grammars, Latin Lexicons, Roman History Books, Books of Private Life, Mythology, Antiquities, Miscellaneous, Illustrative Material to be made by teacher and pupil.

Miss Sophronia M. Kent gave a paper on 'Supplementary work for third year Latin.' It told of games, plays, pictures and other devices to make the Latin work more interesting and attractive.

A report of a committee on library equipment was given by Miss Ada Stewart of Peoria. She gave a list of books in which was a minimum list designated by stars. The minimum list contained sixty-five titles, the complete list, two hundred ten. The list is classified under these heads.

Language

Antiquities

History and Historical Biography

English, Fiction and Poetry

Plays

Mythology and Religion

Literature and Literary Biography

Miscellaneous

Some experimentation of a scientific nature was done. Miss Mary L. English, in 1913, reported an experiment that was tried in second year Latin, in the Decatur High School. To one section was given a larger amount of translation than to the others. This section was given no prose composition, no systematic work in grammar, no collateral reading on the Roman army, history, or private life,



but just a large amount of Latin reading, *Fabulae Pacile*, *Viri Romae*, *Eutropitus*, *Nepos*, *Livy*, and *Caesar*. They were then tested to see how well they were fitted to read *Cicero*. This experiment did not bring the expected results. The pupils of this section were not able to translate *Cicero* any better than did the pupils of the other sections, and they missed all the supplementary work. The experiment, however, converted the teacher to the belief, that the reading of the second year should be more varied than was usual.

Mr. J. C. Brown, in 1915, gave a report of his investigation on, "The Preferences of High School Pupils for the Various Subjects of the Curriculum." This investigation did not seem to be influenced by propaganda. In the Horace Mann School, Newark, New Jersey, Latin ranked 10. In Decatur, with the Boys, 16; with the Girls, 11. Dubuque, with the Boys, 18; with the Girls, 6. Hackenrack, with the Boys, 18; with the Girls, 17.

An exposition of the Laboratory Method of teaching Latin was given by Miss Ethel Luke of Springfield, but it was almost exclusively about the method, and very little about Latin.

"The Ups and Downs of Supervised Study" by Grace Eldredge of Joliet, was an exposition of supervised study as applied to Latin. The paper showed the merits and defects of the method.

"The Latin Recitation in the Laboratory Method" was discussed by Miss Julia F. Evans of the Proviso Township High School. She had been experimenting with this, and had found it, not a complete success. She gives advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages, however, she thought could be overcome. This subject aroused interest and a committee was appointed to investigate the different forms of laboratory work in Illinois and to report at the next Conference.



## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

It might be worth while to inquire into these things that have hindered or prevented the Conference from doing more constructive work. Chief among these hindrances is one thing that also harms the work of the high schools, the rapid change in the personnel of the teaching force. Since the average life of service of a teacher is less than five years, the personnel of the teachers has changed at least three times, in the history of the Conference.<sup>1</sup> This has broken the continuity of the work. It has frequently been the case that those in charge of the work who knew of the progress already made by the section, have dropped out, and new ones, unfamiliar with what has been accomplished, and to whom the purpose of the Conference is unknown, have twisted and have marred this work or even have dropped it completely and started something entirely different. It has often been necessary to completely reorganize a section, and in this way the progress already made has been lost.

This breaking into the continuity of the work hinders it in its most vital part, because the work was not carried through to a conclusion. The start was made. Something would be organized, presented and adopted. The next step is to try out, criticize and revise. To make the work valuable from a scientific standpoint, the latter part of the program is imperative, yet this is the part that frequently was not carried through to completion. Some schools never tried the work at all, fewer criticized it, and often instead of revising what had already been done, the section commenced something entirely new.

New teachers coming into the Conference were not familiar with its purpose and consequently did things that ran counter to that

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1. Littler, S. H. The Mobility of the Teaching Population, p. 38.  
(an unpublished master's thesis)





purpose. Different sections have at times given a program similar to the conventional teachers' meeting, consisting largely of the inspirational type of address<sup>1</sup> and did not investigating or experimenting. In fact, some sections in trying to attract numbers have sought to import some distinguished speaker to inspire their section. Such inspiration seldom culminated in organization for work. It was recognized that there was a place for the inspirational address<sup>2</sup> and the director provided for a limited number, from time to time, but to devote the entire or even the larger part of the programs to such would absolutely defeat the purpose of the Conference.

It was foreign to the purpose of the Conference at the beginning to attract large numbers. Consequently the very success of the Conference was a hindrance to its work.<sup>3</sup> The attendance kept climbing and climbing from year to year without a slump, except in the year of 1918. On account of the influenza epidemic and the war, there was a great falling off in the attendance this year. The next meet, however, had a larger attendance than any previous year, and this in turn was outranked by the year of 1920. The large numbers in attendance made many of the sections too large for conference. They became in themselves conventions, and many could not help but be listeners. For this reason, the purpose of the Conference was partly defeated because the discussion of the problems of the classroom and the school as a whole could not have general participation.

Lack of coordination between the different parts of the organization has hindered the work. The general sessions were organized chiefly to give directions for the coordination of the work. But many teachers did not attend these, especially the general

1. Hollister, Proceedings of the High School Conference, 1916, p. 12.

2. Ibid. 1916, p. 14.

3. Ibid. 1919, p. 10.



meeting of Saturday forenoon,<sup>1</sup> where plans were made for the next year. The organization of the sections tended toward specialization which, while it made for more efficient work within the section, often caused the different sections to work at cross purposes. An example of this is that of the Geography section outlining a course for two years of work in Geography while the other science sections were organizing the science work in such a way as to take from Geography the half-year that had been allotted to it. It is an open question as to whether the organization of the administrative section did not do more harm than good. The constructive work of this section has been very small, and its organization has prevented the school executives, who, almost alone, are responsible for the making and the changing of the curricula and the policies of the high schools, from knowing of the good work accomplished by the other sections. For this reason much of the best work of the conference has never found its way into many schools.

The method of the publication of the constructive work of the Conference has been a hindrance to its influence. It is buried in the mass of the proceedings, and, no doubt, many executives and a large number of teachers never have known of it. It would seem to be a task worth while if each section could have a committee sift the proceedings, choose what is valuable, edit and present it in as attractive and as readable a form as possible, and have it published for distribution for the teachers of the section and the administrators.

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1. Hollister, Proceedings of the High School Conference, 1919, p. 10.

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